

LATEST NEWS.

[illegible]

Barthelme's empty world
Barthelme has been in

[illegible]

ment to every morning, and the situation of everything there was grim and gloomy. Our forces re-occupied the Chancellorsville. The enemy made a rally from their second line of works, but after a severe contest were repulsed and driven back again. On the 13th the march was resumed, and our forces entered at Burnside's Bridge. The total loss will not exceed 200 in killed and wounded, and 100 in horses. Several bridges on the Virginia Central Railroad were destroyed. The rebel Gen. J. A. R. Smith is reported by the Richmond papers to have been killed in battle. The 30th South Carolina, in the fight at Yellow Tavern, Gen. Sheridan has formed a splendid corps of Cavalry.

General Butler has sent to the War Department a fatal dispatch, dated Saturday morn., on Saturday morning. He was then on Drury's Bluff. On Friday evening, Gen. Gillmore, by a flank movement, defeated and took the enemy's works on their right. On Saturday morning at eight o'clock, General Smith carried the first line on the right of the rebels, with but small loss. The rebels retired into three square redoubts, upon which our artillery was playing at the close of the day.

General Burnside had a fight of four hours on the 4th, at Bull's Gap, near Hattersville, in East Tennessee. The rebels sustained, and the Union troops, at last

Gen. Sherman has officially notified the War Department of the evacuation of Dalton, and states that our forces are in the rear on the flank of the rebels. A dispatch from Cincinnati says that Gen. Thomas Dalton was captured about 5,000 prisoners and 10 or 12 pieces of artillery. The rebels have retreated in some disorder to Roanoke and Rome.

Gen. Sigel has officially reported himself at Woodcock, Virginia. The rumor that he has broken the railroad between Lynchburg and Charlottesville is untrue.

Advices from Red River, via Cairo, state that the rebels have constructed at least three batteries on Red river, between Mouth and Alexandria. General McClernand was soon to reinforce General Banks.

WHAT TO CALL HIM.

"Is the A long or short?" asks a swall to his pal.

"What the rule is as plain as your nose, or a

strepie;
Gart-bat-di when Duchesse give him a bal;
Gart-bat-di when up goes the shout of the
people." —Punch

1877 A lady in an omnibus at Washington, tapped the great unfinished dome of the capitol, and said innocently, "I suppose those are the gas works?" "Yes, ma'am, for the nation," was the reply of a fellow passenger.

1878 Women can keep a secret; but it generally takes a good many of them to do it.

☞ The streetest faces are to be seen by moonlight, when one sees half with the eye and half with the fancy.

☞ If men will but amuse the world, it will freely forgive them for cheating it.

☞ It not unfrequently happens that manners are best learned from the unmannerly.

☞ The crquette who wins and sacks ovens, would, if she were a military conqueror, win and sack cities.

☞ A report of the Asburton Coal Co., located in Schuykill, Pa., says that such colliery, when worked to the best advantage, will produce 75,000 tons of marketable coal annually, making the aggregate yield of the district 100,000.

will be about \$1.30 per ton, and the transportation to the New York market about \$2.00, making its cost per ton in New York about \$3.30. The selling price of coal in New York to-day is \$5.50 per ton, showing, if this report can be relied upon, a clear profit of \$2.20 per ton.

☞ **Morrow's Library** is the Malle of Robin, and the Rev. Mr. Day a popular preacher. "How inaccusant," said the Archbishop Waseley, "is the piety of certain ladies here. They go to day for a sermon, and to *morrow* for a novel!"

☞ **S** is great is the emigration now going on from Europe to this country, that the emigrants have to secure their passage a long time before the day of sailing.

☞ **T**he world has a million of mouths for bread, but only one nest-home.

MAY.

Once upon the morning May, with solemn

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ing abundant, and surveyed with innocent
gratification the wonderful work of Art and
Nature reflected in the large mirror of the
which she displayed herself. Art had done
much, but nature had done more. Nature
alone had given those abundant tresses of
raven blackness, those large eloquent eyes,
those rosy budding lips, that symmetrical
figure, which combined the stateliness of a
queen with the natural grace of a Greek
beauty. Art, it is true, had arranged the
tresses with exquisite taste and draped the
figure with becoming robes, and, for my
part, I believe it to be the duty of a lovely
woman to do all she can to lighten and
preserve her loveliness. Her beauty is a
precious gift which she must not deal with
lightly. To the world she is a splendid pic-
ture—a wonderful sculpture—a masterpiece,
whose contemplation has in it a rare and
peculiar pleasure.

"Nought under heaven so strongly doth allure
The sense of man and all his mind possess."

But while the Comtesse de Briancourt
surveyed herself in her mirror, a sudden
fear took possession of her soul. She called
Lisette.

"Lisette! Is it true? Can it—can it
be—?"

"Oh, madame, you frighten me! What
is the matter?"

"Lisette, look! Lisette! Here—over my
right eyebrow, and near the temple; is it
not a wrinkle?"

Lisette looked carefully at the charming
forehead bowed down before her, and, after
a painful scrutiny, detected just a line on
its smooth and glittering skin, as if time
had not had the heart to complete the
serious work which in some unlucky moment
he had begun. Lisette was compelled
to acknowledge that a wrinkle was just per-
ceptible to the eye of jealousy, but she
doubted whether it would be visible to the
kind gaze of Léon.

The Comtesse de Briancourt flung her-
self into the nearest fauteuil, and sighed
deeply.

Lisette applied to her eyes a daintily-embroidered handkerchief.

"I must marry," said the Comtesse de
Briancourt, "before the few charms have
faded which can insure me a lover. This
wrinkle is a warning which I dare not ne-
glect! No fate is more deplorable than that
of a deceased beauty who resorts to trickery
and artifice to preserve but a semblance of
the worship which was once offered her as
her right. I must marry, Lisette—but
whom?"

"Who, indeed, madame?" said Lisette;
"I know no one worthy of you."

"We women always fling ourselves away,
Lisette; self-sacrifice is our privilege and
our duty."

"Nevertheless, among the thousand
admirers who live upon madame's smiles,
there may be one who has had the good for-
tune to please her."

The comtesse blushed. The comtesse
smiled. After the blush and the smile came
a sigh. Our fair readers can, perhaps, de-
termine for themselves what these symp-
toms portended. Lisette read them her own
way, and continued—

"I know, at least, of one true heart which
beats only for madame!—lives but in the
sunshine of her favor—beats in—"

"Blissed, Lisette! I detect these com-
monplaces of love-poets' lovers. Would you
have me believe so faithful and disinter-
ested?"

"The Vicomte de Mauprat," replied the
soubrette, with a slight smile, and curiously
observing the warm color which suddenly
spread over the snowy bosom and delicate
cheeks of the comtesse. "Ah! he is a true
man. He has the air noble and the elated
soul! Such generosity! Such honor! And, oh,
such a face and figure!"

"Hush, hush!" interrupted the comtesse,
though her sparkling eyes belied her words;
"let me hear no more of this monster of
existence. One would think that every
one else in the world was ignorant of my
existence."

"Nay, nay, madame," said Lisette; "there
is Monsieur Paul Duchesne, the *fermier*
general; he is only sixty, and very wealthy.
Besides, he is dropical, and is constantly
afflicted with the gout. Madame would
make an admirable nurse!"

The comtesse frowned.

"Then there is the Baron d'Albret, who is
sure to make a good husband. He takes
such care of everything belonging to him
that he will take care of you, madame, when
you are a part of his property. And the
Marquis de Launay—handsome certainly,
but then, his temper! *Mon Dieu!* I would
sooner marry a volcano! But ma-
dame is silent—madame smiles—can it be
the marquis whom she contemplates?"

"Yes, Lisette," exclaimed the comtesse,
with a sudden energy, "you are right; it is
the marquis." She continued to herself, as
she hurriedly paced the room: "The vicomte
passed me yesterday without a glance
or sign of recognition. He cannot love me!
He has trifled with my heart, but he shall
see how calm, how indifferent I am! I will
marry the marquis, and when I meet M. de
Vicomte at court I will annihilate him with
my superb disdain. Yes, Lisette, I am re-
solved. I will write to my sisters and ac-
quaint them with their fate."

She seated herself at her writing-table,
but her hands trembled and her lips quiv-
ered. It was some moments before she

could compose herself sufficiently to ex-
ecute her task. Lisette looked on in silence
at a drama whose purpose she could not
comprehend.

The comtesse wrote three letters—two of
courtship directed to the *fermier* general
and the Vicomte de Mauprat, (I am not
sure but that the latter was motivated with
the best tears of wounded pride and slighted
affection.) To the marquis she wrote as
follows:

"If your love for me be as true as you
would have me believe, if your affect is as
worthy of me and yourself, I will no longer
refuse to listen to you. I write in doubt, in
fear, in hesitation; it is for you to reassure
me. I shall be at home and alone this
evening."

MELANIE.

Just as she had finished the last of her
letters, the Marquis de Nardillac was an-
nounced, and the comtesse hurriedly en-
trusted the three fatal billets to Lisette, with
directions to enclose and address them prop-
erly and forward them without delay. She
turned to receive her visitor, and Lisette
quitted the salon.

We will quit it with her, for the conver-
sation of two pretty women, however in-
teresting to themselves, has seldom much
attraction for a masculine listener.

Lisette read the letters with the curiosity
proper to a lady's maid, and was ill pleased
with their contents. She really loved the
comtesse, and had a strong penchant for the
liberal and handsome De Mauprat. She
was, besides, too shrewd a woman not to
understand that her mistress had set on a
mere whim, a momentary pique, and that
her folly could not but lead to a long and
perhaps unavailing repentance. It was her
duty, she conceived, to prevent an issue so
disastrous; and accordingly she placed the
letters in fresh enclosures, and directed them
after her own ideas of propriety. Her
next step was to summon Francois—a com-
est of considerable ingenuity and more
than ordinary good looks, between whom
and herself tender relations had long been
established—and despatch him with the
three missives, particularly enjoining him
to observe in what manner each gentleman
received his billet. These preliminaries af-
fecting, Lisette resigned herself to a many-
volumed romance by Mademoiselle de Scu-
deri, and—the Fates!

An hour had elapsed, and from the land
of romance she had insensibly passed into
the land of dreams, when Francois returned
from his mission.

Lisette woke up with a start, rubbed her
eyes, sighed deeply at the sudden overthrow
of a delicious *chateau d'Espagne*, whose
erection had beguiled her slumbers, and de-
manded how he had fared.

He had found, he said, the Marquis de
Launay engaged with his tailor. He read
the note, smiled, hummed a tune,
twisted the note into a paper-light for his
cigar, and bade Francois inform the cor-
tesse that he was going to marry the
Baronne de Launay that day forthright.

"Ex-cusez-moi," exclaimed Lisette.
"And the *fermier* general?"

M. Paul Duchesne was busily engaged
over a ponderous ledger, summing up his
last year's gains. When he had finished
the perusal of his billet, he shut up his led-
ger, rubbed his hands, sprang off his stool,
and kicked Francois out of the room, de-
claring that he was the most fortunate of
men!

"What have I done?" cried Lisette, and
continued eagerly—"The Vicomte de Mau-
prat? Quick, Francois! What of him?"

He read the note with a changing cheek,
and seemed incapable of speech. Then, as
if smitten to the heart, he hastily put on
his hat, took up his sword, and rushed out
into the street—whether Francois was unable
to say, but surmised that the unfortunate
noble's body would next day be found in
the Morgue.

"*Mon Dieu!*" sighed poor Lisette; "je
suis deesse! I am heart-broken! I am un-
done! I have married my mistress to a
dropical old miser, who will be continually
trusting his gouty toe into all her pleas-
ures! And the unfortunate vicomte!—so
handsome!—so generous! Francois, I will
poison myself—I will poison M. Paul Du-
chesne!"

Let us leave Lisette to the tender con-
solations of her Francois. They proved so
far successful that she was able to attend
her mistress at her evening reception, though
her brow was heavy with disastrous mean-
ing.

It was evening—the eventful evening
which was to decide the fate of the Com-
tesse de Briancourt.

The beautiful widow reclined on a luxu-
rious settee in that half light which is so
admirably adapted to subdue, and, there-
fore, enhance the charms of an evening
toilette. Her face, however, was very pale,
and her bright eyes ever and anon were
dimmed with sudden tears. She had al-
ready repented of her decision; already she
regretted the whim which would bestow
her hand on one whom she felt she did not
love. The vision of De Mauprat—gallant,
handsome, noble-hearted, and devoted—
would obtrude itself upon her, and she con-
fessed to herself that her choice had been
one which would involve the penalty of a
life-long suffering and an unavailing re-
pentance.

Lisette was seated near her—as pale as
her mistress—half asleep, yet half desirous
to assist in the decision of which she had
been guilty.

So silently a step was heard upon the stairs,
and the door opened. The comtesse look-
ed upon her sister, and Lisette resolutely
closed her eyes.

The new comar advanced with a noiseless
step, knelt by the beauty's side, took her
hand, pressed it respectfully to his lips, and
exclaimed—

"Melanie, may I hope? May I trust to
deserve thy love? Am I not deserving my-
self? Speak, dear sister, or let me die!"

It was the voice of Vicomte de Mauprat.

Lisette opened her eyes, and opened them
very wide, while her heart beat with a sen-
sation of intense relief.

The comtesse was surprised but equally
delighted. She could not understand how
so fortunate a denouement had been brought
about, but accepted it with tranquil satis-
faction, and in reply to her lover's impas-
sioned prayers was such as to render him
not the least happy of the trio.

In the course of the evening the comtesse
received two letters: one from the marquis,
insolent and defiant; the other from the
fermier general announcing his approaching
marriage with a celebrated *seigneur*, who,
having grown weary of her love, was now
desirous of uniting her to a wealthy busi-
ness man. She wisely put both letters in the
fire, and in a fortnight after became the
Vicomtesse de Mauprat.

But it is not every lady who has a Lisette
to regulate the delivery of her love-letters.
Let not this "over true" narrative, there-
fore, encourage our fair reader, out of fear
of a wrinkle, to indulge in a whim, lest the
consequences should be more disastrous to
them than they were to Melanie, Comtesse
de Briancourt!

AUNT RUTH.

FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY M. J. A.

Dear Aunt Ruth! How well I remember
her. She was not really my aunt at all, but
I always called her so because her relatives,
with whom I associated a great deal, did.

A homely, cheery woman, with a spotted
white kerchief crossed over her ample, mo-
therly bosom, and always a kind smile for
me when we met. A plain woman in
dress and face and manner—not polished
up to the modern standard of gentility—but
never coarse or uncouth; not learned, save
in the great law of human kindness and the
commands of her divine master. An angel
if I was only half as sure of Heaven as
Aunt Ruth I should be a happy woman.

With her religion was not a stern duty—a
rigid precept, to be performed because one
must do it to save their soul from eternal
punishment, but a spontaneous expression
of love and trust in an all-wise and infinite
helper, a going out of her whole heart in
gratitude and reverence.

I do not think I have ever known a more
cheerful person. Many and many a hearty
laugh her places and I have had over the
quaint speeches and lively sallies that made
Aunt Ruth's society wonderfully attractive
to my young women, and not less so to our
elders, and the opposite sex as well. By
each and all it was "Aunt Ruth" always,
and by each and all she was liked and loved.

Aunt Ruth was a widow with only two
children, both sons. One of these was still
at the East when I became acquainted with
her. The other, the younger, had come to
the West to better his fortune. This one
was Aunt Ruth's darling, and at his sug-
gestion she sold her home and everything
that she possessed in Virginia and came to
live with him. He was a good-natured young
man, with more vanity than sound sense or
discretion, but college bred, thanks to the
exertions of his mother, a fluent speaker, if
not a profound thinker, and at the time of
my acquaintance with him a candidate for
the ministry. Dearly as Aunt Ruth loved
this son the great grief of her life was con-
nected with him. He made a slow marriage.
It was not that the bride was poor—Aunt
Ruth had always been a hard-working wo-
man, and did not despise poverty—but this
new daughter-in-law was a selfish, intriguing,
and a member of a disreputable family.

Aunt Ruth knew nothing of this till it was
too late to retract her steps; and when her
money was all gone, nearly every dollar of
it for the benefit of her son's family—for he
was no manager—then the old mother-in-
law was unwelcome, and the troubles began
in earnest. To Aunt Ruth, proud and hon-
est, it was galling and wormwood to associ-
ate with the in-no-way respectable people who
came to her son's house on the familiar foot-
ing of relatives and intimate friends of the
son's wife.

Poor Aunt Ruth! I have seen her cry
like a child at night of the degradation that
had come upon her in her old days. It
made my heart ache for it is the most
desolate thing in the world to see old age
weeping in utter despair. What the end
will be I do not know. She is far enough
from me now, and I seldom hear from her;
but in the quiet evenings, in the pleasant
days of spring, I often think of her and
wonder whether her son is to be in dark-
ness, or whether some gleam of hope may
not at last light up her sky, and God
all "her last days to her best days," and
glad!

THE CONVERTED FUGITIVE.

"That reminds me of a thing that hap-
pened to Dick and myself in London, two
years ago," said Harry, laughing.

"We were taking a walk in a re-her bad part of Lon-
don one day, when we heard an altercation
going on, and among the voices we distin-
guished an unmistakable Down East one.

"I would have known that it hailed from
Connecticut, if you had heard it half-way
up the great pyramid of Cheops; and as
Jonathan appeared to be in the minority, we
stepped into the crowd to see what was the
cause of the row. In the centre of a crowd
of vagabonds, of which a thumping big dry-
man appeared to be the leader, was a long,
slender Yankee, six feet two in his boots,
dressed in his go-to-meeting clothes, with
an awfully shiny hat on. The crowd
seemed very anxious to immolate him, while
he was loud in his assertions of arrest if
they touched him.

"We asked our countryman the cause of the
tumult. He said he was going quietly
along, when a drunken fellow ran against
him and tried to push him off the sidewalk.
That fellow he couldn't do it, he'd struck
at him and pegged his hand to pieces on his
shoulder, and that 'cause he'd done so them
chaps wanted to lick him.

"If you say you'll fight me and not take
the law of me, I'll knock your head off,"
growled the big dryman.

"I'll take you up if you tech me," said
Jonathan. "I'm a peaceable man, and I
want you to leave me alone."

"We interceded, tried to pacify the repro-
bates, and succeeded in some degree, where-
upon Jonathan said he couldn't stay no
longer, bid us good-day and tramped off,
forgetting his umbrella, which was a fortu-
nate occurrence for us.

"We walked off, but as ill-luck would
have it, a young scoundrel about eight years
old, having a natural antipathy to clean
pans, threw a handful of mud upon Dick's
unwieldy shoulders, to which Dick responded
with a pelt from his case, which made the
young ruffian howl merrily.

"In an instant we heard an awful imprec-
ation, followed by 'hit my boy, will you?'
and, turning, we saw the big dryman on a
dead run for us, followed by the crowd
which we had just belied.

"We were in for a terrible pounding, that
was plain. Escape was impossible, so we
faced the music. They seemed a little afraid
of Dick's stick, and came on in a half circle,
preparing to make a grand rush together.
Just at this moment into the circle, to our
great astonishment, came our long Connecti-
cut friend.

"Without waiting to be on the defensive,
as the waker party generally does, he hit
the big dryman on the nose with such pre-
cision that he fell as though a steam-engine
had struck him.

"Then he hit out right and left, and down
came two more blackguards.

"Astonishment at trifled us for a moment,
but a short and spirited address, delivered
to us by the descendant of the Pilgrim
Fathers, in something like the following
words: 'Go in, boys, and give the infernal
critters fits,' accompanied by the downfall
of two more of the bold Britons, set us at
work, and I assure you we were very indus-
trious for a short space of time.

"We did very well, but our efforts were
child's play compared with those of Brother
Jonathan.

"I never saw such hitting in my life. He
did his work most awkwardly, but most ef-
fectually.

"His long arms flew about like those of an
insane windmill, but every time he let out,
down went a man, and if he was hit fairly
he didn't get up again in a hurry. He was
everywhere at once.

"A big fellow had seized Dick's stick and
was intent upon spoiling his beauty, when
the Yankee came swooping around, and
down he went—and stayed down.

"Two fellows were praising your humble
servant disagreeably hard, when I heard
the Connecticut slogan, 'Give the infernal
critters fits,' and away they both went, one
knocked down by the fall of the other. He
was dropping them like ninepins, street-
sweeper rolling over omnibus cad, and
pick-pocket over both of them, when a cry
of police was raised and our opponents
vanished like magic. Jonathan picked up
his umbrella and we turned down the street.

"Arrived at a respectful distance from the
scene of action, Dick stopped short and
said, very coolly:

"Look here, are you Tom Hyer or ain't
you?"

"Jonathan grinned, but denied the soft
impeachment.

"Who are you, then?" said Dick. "You've
been in the same business I know. No one
but a professional could hit so savagely as
you did."

"Then Jonathan, after some hesitation, ac-
knowledgeed that he had been a prize-fighter
once, but grace had been given to convert
him to the Methodist persuasion—that his
profession had kept him from responding to
the overtures of the big dryman, but when
he came back and saw two gentlemen going
to be licked for taking his part, the old
Adam became rampant, and had impelled
him to the battle, which was very wrong,
said he peaceably; 'but,' added he with a
jolly grin, the old Adam rising again—
'Didn't we give the critters fits?'

SWIMMING BATHS IN PARIS.

The 15th of May is the usual day for
opening. But even this is not infrequently
early, and few ladies venture to take a
middle, of the following month of May.
There are now on the Seine a great many
establishments of the kind, of which the
most convenient and accessible are those
near the Tuileries, close to the Pont Neuf
(which was formerly near the Pont de
la Concorde,) and the baths near the
des Saints Peres, somewhat higher up.

The method of teaching natation is, in all
fancy, exactly similar, as are likewise the
prices asked. The sum of 2 francs (2
shillings, 6 pence) is a lesson, or by abatement of
lessons, of 17 francs 80 centimes, is a

LINES.

ON THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

When Marmaduke came down to Fairburn according to his promise, but it cost him a great effort. With every stage his spirits seemed to fall and fall; and when Mrs. Myrtle at last clasped him in her arms—for Master Marmaduke was over a great favorite of hers, and the fact of his having grown up and got married weighed with her not a feather—his face was paler than when she had seen it last, notwithstanding his three years of happiness and freedom. It was Christmas-time; the Rectory was a bower of ivy and holly-berries; and just within the threshold, the locality which the good housekeeper had chosen for her embrace, hung a huge bunch of mistletoe, the finest that could be found in all the Chase. In the spotless kitchen, so exquisitely clean that you might, as the phrase goes, "have eaten your dinner off the floor," if it had not happened to have been a Sunday one, there were preparations for sumptuous feasting; a delightful fragrance, suggestive of mince-pies with plenty of citrus, pervaded Mrs. Myrtle's private parlor, where the divine mysteries of Apiculus were being celebrated. The little larder, cold and immaculate as a dead sucking-pig ready for the spit, was vied with noble meats as for a slice; while monstrous pasties and plum-puddings, too many for the broad stone slabs, reposed upon the Dutch tiles that formed its carpet. It was not intended that the inhabitants of the Rectory should eat all the good things themselves; but it was a custom of Mr. Long, aided and abetted by Mrs. Myrtle, to keep open house for about a fortnight at this festive period, and to entertain certain worthy persons, who were old and indigent, in the sanded kitchen daily. Attempts to edify the Poor in those days were not made so often as they are at present, but it was held essential by all good Christian country-folk to keep Christmas as a feast, and to see that others kept it. I suppose Fairburn Hall was the only house in the country where that Blessed Time was ignored and taken no account of; Sir Marmaduke had never suffered the slightest honor to be paid to it; and his worthy deputy and locum-tenens, Richard Gilmore, treated it with the like contumely.

LOST SIR MASSINGBERD.

CHAPTER XXXII.

TAKING THE SEALS OFF.

Heavy gloom he cast around him evoked. I could see, some unpleasant association, and even, perhaps, a vague terror.

There is something uneasy in exploring any dwelling the rooms of which have been locked up and neglected for years—places that have been once consecrated to humanity, but have afterwards been given up to solitude and slow decay. Memories of their ancient inmates seem to hang gloomily about them, like the cobwebs in their corners; they are eloquent of desert and of death. The shriek of the mouse, and the singing of the blue fly in the pane, have perhaps alone been heard there in the interim; but there seem to have been other and ghastlier noises, which cease at our approach. Who knows what eerie deeds our sudden intrusion may have interrupted!

What floor glimmered through the doors, What footstep trod the upper floor, are we broke in! The peculiar circumstances under which our search was made intensified these feelings in us three, and even Gilmore, who accompanied us, was affected by them.

O'er all there hung the shadow of a fear; A sense of mystery the spirit haunted, And said as plain as whisper in the ear, This place is worse than haunted.

The library was the first room we entered, which even in the palest days of Fairburn Hall had been a dreary room, because the least in use. Except Marmaduke himself, no one ever sat there; the wicked books, which were the only sort read and patronized by Sir Marmaduke, were all in the Squire's private sitting-room, and the gaps in the shelves that lined the present apartment, revealed that the Heath had laid in a considerable stock of them. Old Sir Westworth, a miser in his old age, had been a dunce in his youth, and was once heard openly to regret that circumstance from the fact that he was unable to peruse the loose continental literature which his ancestors had provided for his delectation, free of expense. In the rare cases when the Oak Parlor had not sufficient accommodation for the guests of the misanthropic Squire, they had been wont to adjourn to the present apartment, to smoke and lounge through half the night; but it bore no trace of having been so used. Every chair and sofa were in their appointed place, as though they had grown up like trees through the dusty carpet. Upon the tables and mantel-pieces, the dust had settled inches thick. The grate was laid ready for lighting; but over the coals and sticks hung a sort of midwife, that looked as if it would have defied a pin-torch to set light to it. These things we remarked slowly, one by one, for the butler had only opened the shutters of one window, and the extent of the apartment was prodigious. The shelves were filled almost entirely with quartos—books were not hand-books in those days—rich with plates, and "meadows of margin;" you could not have sent a child on an errand to bring one of them; if he had managed to extricate a tome at all by painfully kneeling at its head and foot, it might have fallen out and brained him. A fourth of the entire stock was composed of books of Catholic theology.

"Those," observed Mr. Long, "are the most valuable things in the library. Sir Nicholas is supposed to have won his bride by paying that costly tribute to her faith. The illuminations are most rare and splendid—Why, what is this, Gilmore? I can't get this volume down. It seems stuck to the others."

The butler grinned maliciously.

"I think you will find them all like that, sir. There's nothing but the wood backs left. The Squire disposed of these books soon after Mr. Marmaduke left, and got this imitation stuff put up instead."

Mr. Long broke out into wrathful indignation, but the young heir kept silence, only smiling bitterly.

"Perhaps he was afraid that their heterodoxy might do his nephew harm," remarked I, rather tickled, I confess, by this characteristic fraud.

"No, sir," replied Gilmore dryly; "he merely observed, that, being theological works, there was as much in them now as before."

"Impious wretch!" exclaimed the rector. "See, he has battered the Fathers of the Church for a set of empty backgammon boards, and lettered them with their venerable names."

"Here, however, is the Family Bible," said I; "he has not sold that."

The spider had spun his web across the sacred volume, but it opened readily enough at the only place, perhaps, into which its late owner had ever looked—the huge yellow fly leaf, upon which were inscribed the names of the later generations of the Heaths; Sir Marmaduke's birth in his father's own handwriting, and Sir Westworth's death in that of his son's, and only too probably his murderer's. The autograph was bold and flowing, quite different from the crabbed hand of the parent, in which the names of Gilbert Heath and Marmaduke's mother were also written, as likewise that of Marmaduke himself. There was a little space beneath this last; and the young heir, looking over my shoulder, pointed to it significantly; doubtless, it had been hoped by the last possessor of the volume that this might

one day have been filled up by the date of his nephew's demise.

We were about to leave the room, when Mr. Long suddenly exclaimed:—"Nay, let us try the secret way. You told me, I remember, that you did not know of Joe's ladder; Marmaduke. The spring lies in the index of Joseph, a wooden volume, which perhaps put this notion of 'whiskies' into Sir Marmaduke's head." This practical satire upon the unpopularity of the Jewish historian was presently discovered, hidden away upon one of those ground-floor shelves, which, if the enthusiastic student investigated at all, it must be upon his knees. After a little manipulation, the spring obeyed, and with a verily creak, as if in protest, the whole compartment of shelves above moved slowly out—and on some hidden hinge, and disclosed the narrow stairs that ended in the shepherd's of the state-chamber. The steps were worn-out, and the wall on both sides hung with moth-devoured and ragged tapestry. Marmaduke shrank back, and gazed upon the aperture with abhorrence and dismay. To what vile purposes might it not have been used, beside a that of attempting to over-hrow a poor old man's room; nay, was it not possible that what we had sought, yet feared to find for so long, might be in this very place, where no eye could have looked or thought of looking! Might it not have been hidden there, and been imprisoned alive, in righteous retribution, by the very spring which had ministered to hate and cruelty? "I went up here," said Mr. Long, divining the young man's thoughts, "when I searched the house with Gilmore, and put on the seals. I think we should climb Jacob's Ladder, Marmaduke; as you will make the Hall your home, it is well to leave no spot in it associated with any unpleasantness, unfamiliar." So saying, the Rector led the way, and we all followed; there was some delay while he opened the door above, and certainly it was not a cheerful prospect for us in the meantime, cooped up in the darkness, with the wren touching us with its ghostly folds on either side the narrow way; but I think that my tutor's advice was good, and that his old pupil experienced a feeling of satisfaction when the thing was done. Once more we stood together in that state-bedroom where Marmaduke had suffered such ghastly terrors when a boy.

"I shall I ever forget those thoughts!" muttered he with a shudder. "Can this room ever be otherwise than hateful to me! It was here, as I sat weak and ill in that arm-chair, that my uncle struck me for losing—'Say, now I remember it all, take this shirking-board, Gilmore; take the poker; do not spare the rotting wood. Ay, there it is.' A yellow something lay amid the dust and rubbish, which on inspection turned out to be a gold pencil-case. 'That was lent me by my uncle, a dozen years ago,' said Marmaduke musing, 'and he chastised me for losing it. It had rolled under yonder shirking-board, but I was too terrified at the time to recollect the fact. I wish I could forget things now. Undo the other shutters, Richard. Light, more light.' And thus we let the blessed sunlight into all the shuttered rooms. It glanced in galleries on knights in all their panoply, and smote the steel upon their visors, as though the flame of battle once more darted from their eyes; it made their tattered pennons blush again, and tipped their rusted spears with sudden fire. It flamed upon the stern ancestral faces on the wall, and through their dust evoked a look of life. That winter sun had not the power to warm, however; all things struck cold. The dark oak-panels chilled us from their waveless depths; the cumbersome organ, carved with fruit and flower, kept frozen silence; while in the chapel, Sir Nicholas in stone and midwife struck to our marrow. His lady opposite, upon her knees in her 'devout oratory,' gave us cold looks, as though we had interrupted her devotions. In vain the painted windows, high and triple arched, cast down 'warm gales' upon her marble breast, and filled the sacred place with glorious hues. In vain the gilded scroll, 'Praise for his Saviour,' appealed to us through dust and damp, and his memorial pane blushed scarlet in its endeavor to perpetuate his infancy. All things seemed cursed in that sacred house; the hallowed places desecrated, and those where hospitality and good-fellowship were meant to reign, solitary and barren. There was one apartment still to be visited last of all—Sir Marmaduke's Oak Parlor. There he might have been said to have lived, for it was the only sitting-room he used from early morning—and he was no great sleeper—until very late at night. There, as we have seen, he had held his audiences, and dined, and sometimes slept after any deep debauch. By all the household, except Gilmore, it was held as a Blue-Beard's chamber, and would not have been entered upon any account, even had it not been the Rector's seat upon it. It was here that the Lost Baronet had passed his last hours within the house, and rather he had intended to return—if he had meant to return at all—before he retired for the night. The butler entered it first, and let the light in; then Mr. Long, then I, then Marmaduke. Although I had been there once before, I scarcely recognized the place, for upon that occasion the Squire himself had occupied it, and I had had no eyes except for him. It

was doubtless a comfortable room enough when the fire was shining on its polished walls, and the red curtains snugly drawn over the windows; but with that thin December light—for it was afternoon by this time—creeping coldly in upon the three year-old ashes of the burnt-out fire, and on the panels, smeared with spots and stains, it was very cheerless.

There was no sign of life, save one; The subtle spider, that from overhead Hang like a spy upon human guilt and error, Suddenly turned, and up its slender thread, Rave with a nimble terror.

This insect had woven its webs in every nook and cranny, in readiness for the prey that never came, and the slanting pillars of mists and light that streamed into the gloom seemed almost as palpable as they. A door led up by three or four steps into Sir Marmaduke's bedroom—a bare unfurnished place, where skins of wild animals instead of carpets were spread for a banquet to the moth. His shooting boots stood up still stiff and strong beside the empty grate, although they were white with mildew, and his eight-year lay folded upon the rotting pillow, in preparation for his rest. The sitting-room, however, bore the more striking vestiges of its late proprietor. The huge arm-chair stood a little aside from the fender, where he had pushed it back some time to leave the room; and the book which he had been reading lay open with its face to the table, ready for him to resume to peruse upon his return. A spick case with the shippers in, the couple of cigars which it had been Sir Marmaduke's invariable custom to smoke before going to bed, and a few fly-blown lamps of sugar, were set out in his chosen treasury of creature-comfort. The Rector took up the volume, and with one involuntary glance towards the fire-place, saw the wrinkled and blue-spotted leaves to fragments. A scurrilous French novel had engaged the last hours of the wretched old man, and he went forth—to his doom.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE FAIRY'S WAND.

There are but few of us, I fear, who can say—"Though I should die suddenly, and at the most unlooked for time, there will be nothing left behind me which I would have destroyed, even though I had had the opportunity." Of course, there are none who can boast that they are at peace with all mankind; that they have nothing unrepented of or unatoned for; that their human affairs and social relations are exactly where they would have wished them to be. But independent of these matters, neglected by the very best of us, how eagerly must many a man desire, between the warning and swift strokes of death, that he had had but a little time—a little strength to set, not indeed his house in order, but his desk and his note-book. What a cruel shock have many a family received, after they have lost the head whom they have worshipped so many years, by discovering, where they looked for no such thing, after his death, that he had all along (as will be thought) been even such a one, not as themselves, but worse—as they whom they had been taught by his own self to look upon with contempt, or at least with pity; as they who, by contrast with himself, were persons base and vile. Is there no letter, reader, ragged and time-worn, perhaps, but still legible, lying among that heap of correspondence you intend to window some day—which it will be better to burn, now? Is there no eye-forgotten gift, meant for your own eyes alone, when they were brighter than at present, which it would be well to make an end of this very day? Can you say: "Even though I do not return home to-night, or ever again, but am smashed by a railway locomotive, or driven over by a 'bus, or pottered in a cab, yet there will be nothing of mine, nothing when my friends take stock of my personal effects, of which I need be ashamed." If so, thou art a good man indeed—or one of exceeding prudence. Above all things, my friends, be good, for that is best; but if not, at least be prudent. Let your memories be sullied with no vain all events, in the thoughts of those you leave at home. The actions of the unjust blossom in their dust into flowers compared with which the deadly nightshade is as the violet or the rose. The satirist tells us that in a week, a month, a year at most, the memory of a dead man dies even from the hearts of those he held most dear. This is not true; but the satirist would have been severe yet, and have spoken truth as well, had he said that the memory of a dead man, so far as his vice and wickedness are concerned, dies not at all among his kin. It is spoken of in whippers by the purist, and renders them less pure; it is made light of by the vicious, but only to excuse their wrongdoings by a worse example. "Wild as I may be, I am not so wild as the governor was in his day," is a terrible legacy of comfort to leave bequeathed to one's son.

It is possible that even Sir Marmaduke Heath may at some far back time have deemed it necessary to lay to his soul some flattering unctious of this kind. There were Sir Westworth and Sir Nicholas, and many a Heath to extenuate his acts, if had example might do it. But the time came to him, and very early in life, when he had no

longer this slender justification, since he had outdone his worse progenitor in vice and folly. Mr. Odet had known, Mr. Long had guessed—we all of us had suspected more or less that the lost baronet's life had been evil to the point of an ordinary man; but the dumb revelations which were made concerning it in the necessary communication of his papers, were simply shocking. After destroying these, the next approach to cleansing Fairburn Hall was to discharge all the interior domestic. Mr. Richard Gilmore resented this conduct towards a faithful servant of the family, as he styled himself, very bitterly; but he departed with the rest, laden, there is little doubt, with a very considerable plunder. Presently the upholsterers came down from town with a great following of work-people, and a caravan of wagons bearing costly furniture; then a host of servants, selected with as much care as was possible, replaced the evicted; and when all was ready within and without—the waste places of the grounds being reclaimed, and put upon the same footing with those which hitherto had alone been "kept up"—Sir Marmaduke Heath and his wife themselves took possession of Fairburn Hall.

Art had already done much to change that sombre house into a comfortable as well as splendid mansion; but the presence of its new mistress did more than all to rescue it from the long tyranny of decay and gloom. Beneath her smile the shadows of the past could take no shape, but vanished, thin and pale. She would allow them no where resting-place. Where they had been wont to gather thickest to her husband's eyes, she quelled them by her radiant presence, day and night. The Oak Parlor and its adjoining bedroom she turned into a double boudoir for her own use of self; and straightway all hat-winged, happy-headed memories, the brood of evil deeds, flew from it as the skirts of Night before the dawn, and in their place an angel throng came fluttering in, and made it their abode. No stage-fairy, wand in hand, ever effected transformation so more charming and complete. One fear, and one alone, now agitated Marmaduke's heart—for the safety of his priceless wife in her approaching trial. He would have gladly cancelled nature's gracious promise, and lived childless all his days, rather than any risk should befall Lucy. His friends, his servants, and the villagers, brimful of hope that there should be an heir to Fairburn, flowed over in earnest congratulations; but for his part he felt apprehensive only. His heart experienced no yearning for the child who might endanger the mother. In accordance with her plan of ignoring all that had gone before of shame and sorrow, and regenerating evil places with a baptism of joy, Lady Heath had chosen the state-chamber itself as her sleeping apartment, and there in due time she safely brought forth a son. Upon his knees, Marmaduke thanked Heaven for the blessing which was thus vouchsafed to him, but above all, in that it had brought with it no curse. Verily had the house of mourning become the house of feasting, and the chamber of sorrow the chamber of mirth. The unconscious father had been sitting by the library fire, endeavoring vainly to distract his mind from what was occurring up stairs, and turning his eyes restlessly over and over towards the door, when the voice of Dr. Stowell suddenly broke the silence.

"Sir Marmaduke, I congratulate you; you have a son and heir."

"And my wife!" cried the husband, impatiently.

"She is as well as can possibly be expected, I do assure you."

"You are very welcome," exclaimed the young baronet, "and would have been so, although you had chosen to burst your way in with a torpedo. But I confess you startled me a good deal."

"I am afraid I did," returned the doctor, in a voice like a stream of milk and honey, "although it was not my intention to do so. But the fact is, I did not come in by the door at all. Her ladyship desired that I should bring you the good news by way of Jacob's Ladder; and I may add, that you may come back with me that way and see her yourself for just one quarter of a minute."

So even Jacob's Ladder was made a pleasant thoroughfare to Marmaduke, and dearer from that hour than all staircases of wood and stone.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

FOUND.

Now, when Marmaduke junior—who was named also Peter, to mark the regard which both his parents had for my poor self—became of the ripe age of fourteen weeks, or so, and the spring had so far advanced that the summer was to admit of open-air rejoicings, it was determined that the advent of the heir of Fairburn should be celebrated with all due honor. This would have been done before—for Lady Heath had soon recovered her strength, and the child was reported to be a miracle of health and plumpness—had it not been for the backwardness of the season. The Hall had of course made merry upon the matter long ago, and if all the poor in the place had not done so, it

was from no want of materials for the way of creature-comfort supplied by the young baronet. The winter Marmaduke had been born the Chase might as well be considered as a memory of war and wrong. Marmaduke, then, it is true, had been of an illustrious portion of the Fairburns had been given to the village for child and other expenses, great concern enough now, but the child was accomplished in these days—and the very way which Sir Marmaduke had chosen to many hundreds in opening, had been voluntarily surrendered. Great Richard still retained his office, but being somewhat bedridden, inspired less terror than of years among old-decay; this was not so much to be regretted, however, since there was not little work, and therefore few pleasures in Fairburn, while the general popularity of the young baronet lasted even then. I can assure that if the new owner had been a gay dissipated at night in the House of Commons, it is doubtful whether he would have laid down his neck, or had not been used to his wife's attempt to chastise his wife at chess, in order to know his second barrel. The tower of the Lost Baronet had long been falling from his old estate; and upon this occasion, when old and young were all invited to make holiday in these once almost unknown scenes of hate and dew, there was no motto but our determined—by no means single-minded, however, to explore that thoroughly. The very Wolsey Oak which the rector had made their quarters was not chosen, but in the great space about it, there were real and chance dances, and in the vast hall, made the very headquarters of children's amusement. These young folks did not affect the company of their elders, except when the gongs gave signal from the various marquees that there was food about, what they flocked to meet their parents at the hoped-upon boards with a doubtful alacrity. The higher class of tenantry were upon the lawn and among them mixed with early consideration a goodly number of the country aristocracy. I remember that even of the latter introduced upon this occasion the new dance called the quadrille, which had just arrived from Paris at that time. It had come over in the bad company of the wife; but that lively measure was held to be too indecorous to be imported to Fairburn under her new name. Everybody, when out of earshot of the host and hostess, was talking about the change that had taken place in this respect.

"How odd this all seems," quoth Squire Broadacres to his neighbor, Mr. Flinthart, heir of the late lamented admiral. "None of us, I suppose, have been at the Hall here for this quarter of a century."

"Ay, that at least," quoth the other. "Of course, it is a great matter to see people in the Heath's position properly conducted as to morals. But I doubt whether this young fellow may not go astray in another and even a still more dangerous direction. They say his politics are, dear me, shocking."

"Not a bit of it," replied Mr. Broadacres. "It isn't in the Heath blood to be radical. But his wife, she rules the roast, you see—and a delicious pretty woman too; I could find it in my heart to forgive her anything."

"But that fellow, Harvey Gerard, her father—why, he's a downright sea-cadette, sir."

"The Gerardes are bound to be, my dear sir," returned the jolly squire. "All these things are a question of family; it's nothing but that. I am told there is some French blood in him."

"We want nothing of that sort down in Midsheire," responded Mr. Flinthart, shaking his head.

"But we have got it, you see, my friend, and therefore we must make the best of it. It was all very well to ignore Gerard while he was a newcomer at Dorecot, although, mind you, he was always a gentleman, every inch of him, notwithstanding his queer opinions; but now that he has become so nearly connected with Sir Marmaduke, and living at the Hall half his time, why, the county must make up its mind to receive him."

"I shall let him perceive, however, that it does so—so far at least as I am concerned—upon sufferance, and, as it were—what is the word?—ay, vicariously."

"Very good," observed Mr. Broadacres dryly. "I am not quite clear as to your meaning; but if you intend to put Harvey Gerard down, I do not think you will meet with any very triumphant success. Why, Sir Marmaduke here, who would have grappled with the devil, was tripped up and thrown by this man with the greatest ease."

"Nevertheless, I shall give him my cold shoulder," observed Mr. Flinthart, stiffly; "although I shall studiously avoid being rude."

"Faith, I would recommend your doing that, my friend," answered the jolly squire. "If you turned your back upon Harvey Gerard instead of your shoulder, my belief is that he'd kick you."

"That he'd do what?" exclaimed Mr. Barnardstone Flinthart, late high sheriff and present magistrate and custos rotularum of Midsheire.

"That he'd take advantage of the opportunity, that's all," returned Mr. Broadacres quietly. "No, no, sir, with a man

The Count, all good Tories should keep on good terms. One can't keep him, you know, like a radical, and therefore his wife went while to make ourselves agreeable to the best advantage. A single flight to a clever man has often done more harm to the cause of good government than a whole regiment of dragons can do."

"Oh, quite his cleverness!" responded Mr. Fintner. "I'm far from such military estimates. I think it's the duty of civility to tell young Marmaduke."

"Well, say it, please," interrupted Mr. Broadbent.

"It's a positive duty, I say, that civility should go to this point, and tell him that all this business of peaching, and liberty to the rabble, cannot but lead to harm. You're a young man, he should be told, and don't understand these things; but that is the opinion of the county, and it behooves you to know it."

"That would do more harm than good, Mr. Fintner. You may depend upon it that Marmaduke Heath thinks for himself in these matters, notwithstanding that I dare say Gerard and his pretty daughter have had considerable influence. The young fellow naturally goes against all that his uncle did before him. This holiday-making and mixture of high and low here, are themselves enough to make Sir Marmaduke turn in his grave."

"Ay, if he is in his grave," responded Mr. Fintner. "But who knows whether he may not turn up some day after all; tell me that?"

"I can't tell you that," responded Mr. Broadbent; "but I'll bet you ten guineas to one that he never does."

"Ay, but if he did?" replied the other. "If he was to appear this very day, for instance, what a scene it would be—a real revolution for some people!"

"Well, if he did, he'd find the property greatly improved—except that that right of way has been reopened through the Park; all his thieving servants dismissed; all his debts settled; and his mad gipsy wife amply provided for, and well content, I am told, among her vagabond friends."

Conversations somewhat similar to the above were being held all over the lawn, for the denizens were not, like the lower classes, so bent upon mere physical enjoyment as to be deaf to the delights of scandal. But when the great bell rang for their afternoon repast, which was to be partaken of in one enormous tent, and at one gigantic table, the upper part of which was reserved for the gentlemen, such talk was hushed, of course, and congratulation of host and hostess and the infant heir was the only word for every countenance. Not a word about the uncertainty of Sir Marmaduke's tenure of Fairburn was whispered over the good cheer, or a suggestion hazarded regarding the last proprietor's possible reappearance. Far less, we may be certain, was any hint at such matters let fall when the health of the future Sir Peter—two generations from Marmaduke, and not to be associated with him upon any account—was proposed by Mr. Broadbent, and drank off.

A genuine enthusiasm that brought the tears into his mother's eyes, who with many a fair county dame greeted the banquet as a triumph. Then Mr. Long rose up and spoke of Marmaduke as one whom he had known and loved from his youth up, and the cheering rose tumultuous (not especially at the toast of the table, because they knew him best), and was heard afar by the peasantry who were dining likewise elsewhere, and who joined in it uproariously, although they had already paid due honors to their lord, so that all the Park was filled with cheer. To both these toasts, Sir Marmaduke, aglow with happiness and excitement, the handsome man by far in that great company, with a grateful smile upon his countenance, gave eloquent response.

But when Lucy's health was proposed by Mr. Arabella, in homely but fitting terms, dwelling upon her total lack of pride, her kindness to all that needed help, her beauty, which was sunshine to them all, then the young Squire lost his self-command. He rose to speak with evident embarrassment; he saw herself before him, watching him with eyes that had plenty of pride for him in them, and listening for his words as though his tongue dropped jewels; he knew that he could not contradict one word of praise that had been showered upon him; he could not mitigate for modesty a single phrase of her eulogium, because it was all true, and none but he knew how much more she was deserving of. While he stood there silent for a moment, Sir Marmaduke, who had just parted for his own quarters, there was a commotion at the far end of the tent. With that mysterious confusion which ill news pervades the minds of men, all knew at once some terrible catastrophe had taken place. Several of the guests rose, as if to intercept some person coming up towards the upper table, but none did. "Go on; it must be told." For an instant, Lucy's glance flashed round to see that her child was safe in its mother's arms, then made her way swiftly and silently to her husband's side. Before she reached it, a man who bore the things could not come so far, the whisper had spread: "Sir Marmaduke is dead."

I shall never forget Marmaduke's face

when he heard these words: his color fled; his eyes wandered dully; his hand trembled; his lips moved, but no sound came from them. At the touch of his wife's hand upon his arm, however, a new life seemed to be kindled into him, and as a village boy comes forward bearing a rusty something in his hand, he stretched his hand out for it, murmuring: "What is this? Why do you bring this to me?" The boy was bashful, and gave no answer; but Farmer Arabella stepped forward very gravely, and spoke as follows:

"Why, Mr. Marmaduke, you see," he said, unconsciously reverting to the title for the man he had in his mind, "that is the life preserver Sir Marmaduke always went about with in his woods at night; I know it by the iron ring by which a leathern strap fastened it round his wrist. Where did you find it, oh, boy?"

"Well, sir, we was a-playing at Hide-me and Billi Jervis, and Harry Jones and a lot of us, and the Wolsey Oak was home. So, while it was the other side's turn to hide, and we was waiting for them to cry 'Hoop,' we began to knife the tree a bit, to pass the time; and digging away at the bottom of the trunk, we made a hole, and presently came up to the head of this thing here, and dragged it out. Then we made a bigger hole, and please, sir, there was great big bones, and we couldn't pull them through. Then we was frightened, and called to Jim Meyrick, the keeper, as was in the booth close by; and he climbed up to the fork of the tree, and cried out that the Wolsey Oak was hollow, and there was a skeleton in it, standing up; and they do say as it's Sir Marmaduke."

While the boy was yet speaking, a knot of men came slowly up from the direction of the Oak, bearing something among them; and followed at a little distance by a vast crowd, all keeping an awful silence. When they got near the opening of the tent, they set their ghastly burden down upon the lawn; and we all went forth to look at it, including Marmaduke himself, with a face as pale as ashes, and clenching Lucy by the hand, as though he feared some power was about to tear her from him. I heard her whisper to him:

"This may not be Lost Sir Marmaduke after all."

Dr. Sitwell heard her also, and at once officiously replied:

"Oh, but it is, my lady; there has no man died in Fairburn for these thirty years, except the late baronet, who could have owned those bones. I will pledge my professional reputation that yonder man, when clothed in flesh and blood, was six feet four. What a large skull, and what gigantic thigh-bones!"

"Ay," quoth Mr. Remnant, the general dealer, who was kneeling down beside the skeleton and examining it with minuteness, "though it had been offered to him for sale, 'here is something hard and dry, with iron nails upon it, which was once a shooting-shoe—one of a pair, or I am much mistaken, which I sold to Sir Marmaduke myself."

"And here," quoth Jim Meyrick, stepping forward, "is what I think must have been the Squire's great gold chain, which I found at the bottom of the trunk. The Wolsey Oak is quite hollow, Sir Marmaduke, although some of us knew it. It is my belief that Sir Marmaduke must have climbed up into the fork to look about him—for he seemed to be expecting poachers on that night—and that the rotten wood gave way beneath him, and let him down feet foremost into the trunk."

Without doubt, this was the true explanation of the matter. The skeleton was found with the arms above the head, a position which had precluded self-extraction, although it was evident that the wretched man had made great efforts to escape from his living tomb, since what remained of the shoe of the right foot was much turned up, and retained deep marks of the pressure of the buckle. As I looked at these relics of humanity, the gipsy's curse recurred to my mind with dreadful distinctness: *May he perish, inch by inch, within reach of the aid that shall never come, ere the God of the Poor take him into His hand.*

It was a singular feature in the case, and one which was of course made to point its moral among the villagers, that had Sir Marmaduke not closed the Park, and refused the right of way, he could scarcely have thus miserably perished, since the foot-path, as I have said, absolutely skirted the tree in question; and people would have passed close by it at all hours. It reminded me of the evil fate of James I. of Scotland, who might have escaped his murderers in the Blackfriars' Abbey at Perth, but for the simple fact that he had caused the mouth of a certain vault to be bricked up, because his trunks-bells were wont to roll through it. How low the wretched Squire had suffered before Death released him from his cage, it was impossible to guess, or whether that terrible cry heard by Dick Wadlock that same night, and by myself next morning, was issued from the throat of Sir Marmaduke in his agony. We were the two persons who had been swarmed in the Wolsey Oak between the period of his entombment and the watch instituted throughout the County. He must have been dead I believe for the weeks passed close beside the tree without the least suspicion of the

ghostly Thing it held; unless, indeed, he had heard our voices, though, choked by that time by the falling dry-rot, he was unable to reply. No wonder the revens had sought the Wolsey Oak, and crowded forth Doom therefrom so long!

CHAPTER XXXV.

L'EXVOE.

Weeks elapsed before Marmaduke Heath recovered from this shock of this discovery; but when he once began to do so, he grew up to be quite another man in body and mind. It was only by this change—was we saw him so strong and cheerful—that we got to estimate how powerful had been that sombre influence which had so long overshadowed him, and what great exertion it must have cost him to let it appear to us so little. The uncertainty of his tenure in Fairburn Hall, had scarcely affected him very deeply, in spite of the wand of the good fairy. He went to France for a little trip with his father-in-law, for a thorough change, and there he had that dust thrust upon him of which we have incidentally made mention; let us not judge him harshly in that matter, for men of his day were as wanting in moral courage as they were ignorant of physical force. Yet what a risk—ay, and what a selfish risk—he ran therein, let alone the unchristian wickedness of that wicked adventure. He never dared to reveal to Lucy what he had done; but he confessed it to Harvey Gerard, who rebuked him roundly for the crime; observing, however, to myself, not without some pride, that he had always avowed Marmaduke was a fine fellow, and entertained a proper contempt for all bullies and scoundrels. The young baronet acted weakly, doubtless, but the duellist's blood was surely upon his own head. At all events, that was the view Marmaduke himself took of the matter, and there was now not a happier man in all Midshire than he; discharging the duties of his rank and position in a manner that won the applause of all his neighbors, sooner or later—although Mr. Fintner's applause came very late indeed.

Year after year, I was a frequent guest at Fairburn Hall, and never set foot in a house with inmates more blessed in one another. Year by year, Lucy seemed to grow in goodness, and even, as it seemed to me, in beauty; I saw her last with silver hair crowning her still unwrinkled brow, and since that day, no fairer sight has met these falling eyes.

Death has long released the noble soul of Harvey Gerard, but his name is borne not unworthily by a grandson as fearless as himself, and after it the hard-voiced letters V.C. In a sunny spot in the little churchyard at Fairburn lies my dear old tutor; far from the iron rails which enclose the bones of the long-missing baronet.

Sir Peter—But why should I further speak of death, and make parade of loss and change; an old man like me should, having told his tale, be silent, and not court stranger ears to "gain the praise that comes to constancy."

The last time I saw Fairburn, it lay in sunshine. There was no trace of that bad man whose deeds once overshadowed it, save that in one great space, close to the public footway through the Park, there was a vast bare ring, where grass, it was said, had never grown, although the Wolsey Oak, which had once stood above it, had been cut down for forty years and more. The place was cursed, so village gossip told, by Lost Sir Marmaduke. This may be true or not. My tale itself may lie open to suspicion of untruth, and this and that, which have been therein narrated, have already been pronounced "improbable," "impossible," "absurd." To critics of this sort, I have only to express my regret that the mission of the author has in my case been reversed, and facts have fallen into such clumsy hands as to seem fiction. Let me add one extract from the works of an author popular in my young days, but now much oftener quoted than perused. He is describing a picture-gallery attended by the dilettanti. A carking connoisseur is abusing some effort of an unhappy artist to portray nature. "This fellow," cries he, "has even had the audacity to attempt to paint a fly! That a fly, forsooth!" and he dips at it with contemptuous fingers.

The fly flew away. It was a real one!

THE END.

The Professor thinks it a national disgrace that America was discovered by a "furriner."

It is related that in Crebba Caine, when granders go to the play (i.e. when they have theatres there), the actors fare rather badly. If the gre at a does not approve of their performance, he waves his wand, and his suit is immediately run upon the stage, seized on by the shortest performer, and admitted a poor ad drubbing with their hampers.

The last excuse for criminality is, that the "wonder wheel" is a much hooping.

It is hard for a man to be a scoundrel by holding in the shop where there is a leakage in the kitchen!

There is a shop in Paris which supplies a new shirt to every customer who leaves his dirty one at page two.

HOW TO BECOME LEAN.

FROM CHAMBERLAIN'S LONDON JOURNAL.

A gentleman, formerly corpulent, but reduced of late, by a certain course of treatment, within moderate bounds, has been so good as to publish a pamphlet describing the means by which the deliverance was accomplished. "Of all the parasites," he begins, "that affect humanity, I do not know of, nor can I imagine, any more distressing than that of Obesity; and having just emerged from a very long probation in this affliction, I am desirous of circulating my humble knowledge and experience for the benefit of my fellow men." Nothing can be more meritorious than this, particularly when we take into account the fact that he has circulated them gratis. No less than two editions of the *Letter on Corpulence*, the second edition consisting of fifteen hundred copies, have been given away to the British public. A third edition has just been issued, at sixpence a copy, and thereupon we take the opportunity of noticing this singular production; since it would have been impossible to look at a gift-pamphlet with a critical eye. Even now, it is not our intention to point out any errors; to literary style, Mr. Banting makes no pretence; and therefore, after expressing the wish that he had applied some cleansing process to his sentences, equally efficacious with those directed to his personal physique, we will have done with censure.

The feature that we consider most commendable in our author's character, as evidenced in the present work, is his exceeding courage. He narrates every ludicrous inconvenience that has happened to himself, on account of his great size, with calmness, and even unctious, just as the sinner in a tract describes his previous wicked life before conversion. He is fat no longer, it is true, but he has been very fat indeed. He has not been able to tie his shoe for years. He has been compelled, he says, "to go down stairs slowly backwards, to save the jar of increased weight upon the knee and ankle joints." He has puff'd and blown with very slight exertion, such as going upstairs. He has probably expressed the wish attributed to the late Mr. Daniel Lambert, "that he might be permitted to see his knees before he died"—a tender aspiration which did not bear fruit, since he might just as well have desired to look upon his ears. Mr. Banting reproves, not without pathos, the natural disposition of the public to laugh at excessively fat people. Persons thus afflicted are sufficiently burdened already, without having to bear ridicule. If folks must laugh, let them poke fun at the *This* occasionally, for a change. It was no use, he felt, to endeavor to find a channel for his statement in any literary organ. The *Lancet*, it was not likely, would admit it; first, because medical persons had often tried to reduce Mr. Banting's Parasite fatness and failed; and secondly, because the Faculty made light of a gentleman of five feet five inches high weighing upwards of two hundred pounds. They boldly told him that it was one of the attributes, and even advantages, of advancing years, that one got plumper and plumper annually; that one's circumference should increase like the rings of a tree. However, if he had a fancy for reduction, let him, said they, take to muscular exercise, and since he couldn't walk, let him row. Mr. Banting accordingly hired a boat for his Parasite, and sculled it about for a couple of hours every morning; and thereby, indeed, he gained muscular vigor, but with it a prodigious appetite, which he was compelled to indulge, and which made him fatter than ever.

He tried sea-air and sea bathing; he took gallons of physic and liquor potius; he rode and he walked; he drank the waters of Leamington, Harrogate, and Cheltenham; he "lived up to experience a day, and earned it;" and all that came of it was an accession of the Parasite—more fat. He essayed vapor-baths and shampooing without benefit; and ten Turkish baths, which last had an excellent effect at first, but the improvement did not continue. He took ninety of them, whereby he only lost six pounds, and greatly weakened his constitution. Lastly, moderation in diet—what is called "low living"—was prescribed, which soon produced an impoverished state of the system, and boils and carbuncles; "for 'low diet,'" says the patient, "I was ably 'gerated upon, and fell into increased obesity."

At last Mr. Banting began to grow deaf. He applied to an eminent nasal surgeon, who put him to some torture with blisters; but nothing came of them; on the contrary, he fell into a worse plight than before. However, the eminent nasal surgeon left town for his annual holiday, "which," writes Mr. Banting, naively, "proved the greatest possible blessing to me, since it compelled me to seek other assistance." He applied to Mr. Harvey of Soho Square, under whose regime Mr. Banting lost his Parasite, and recovered his hearing and everything else. The pamphlet is written to describe how this was done, and how every gentleman who is fatter than he should be, may become as slim and genteel as he pleases, by attending to certain simple rules. If Mr. Banting had only made this discovery early enough, there would probably have been no literary

person so highly spoken of by Fred Byrom as the author of the *Letter on Corpulence*. His lordship need not have confined himself so exclusively to gin and water; he might have revelled in the following excellent daily bill of fare, and yet grown as thin as a herring: "For breakfast," says Mr. Banting, speaking of his reformed habits, "I now take four or five ounces of beef, mutton, kidneys, broiled fish, bacon, or cold meat of any kind except pork; a large cup of tea (without milk or sugar), a little biscuit, or one ounce of dry toast."

"For dinner, five or six ounces of any fish except salmon, any meat except pork, any vegetable except potato, one ounce of dry toast, fruit out of a pudding, any kind of poultry or game, and two or three glasses of sherry, claret, or madeira—champagne, port, and beer forbidden."

"For tea, two or three ounces of fruit, a rack or two, and a cup of tea without milk or sugar."

"For supper, three or four ounces of meat or fish, similar to dinner, with a glass or two of claret."

"For nightcap (if), if required, a tumbler of grog (gin, whiskey, or brandy without sugar), or a glass or two of claret and sherry."

This really seems pretty well, and by no means a starvation regimen; and the dry toast or rack, we are assured, may without hurt have a tablespoonful of spirit to soften it. Still, there are many things left out of the above list of food permissible which we should much miss. Bread, for instance, must not be touched by the Obese who wishes to become of moderate proportions, nor butter, sugar, milk, beer, nor potatoes. Such had been the simple (and innocent, as he thought) elements of Mr. B's existence for years, and they had brought him up to the weight we have described. He had been accustomed, according to his own confession, made at a period of genuine penitence, to take bread and milk for his breakfast, with plenty of milk and sugar and buttered toast; meat, bread, "of which I was always very fond," and pastry for dinner; his tea consisted of the same noxious materials as his breakfast; and he generally had a fruit-tart or bread and milk for supper. In fact, Mr. Banting had been accustomed to subsist upon starch and saccharine matter in almost every form, and was unconsciously qualifying himself for the Agricultural Show at Islington.

Certainly, it seems singular that none of the scientific persons he consulted previous to Mr. Harvey seem to have reprobated his rather peculiar diet; and indeed we are involuntarily forced to the conclusion that they were ignorant of its fattening properties.

"Oh that the Faculty would look deeper into, and make themselves better acquainted with, the crying evil of Obesity—that dreadful tormenting Parasite on health and comfort. Their fellow-men might not descend into early premature graves, as I believe many do, from what is termed apoplexy; and certainly would not, during their sojourn on earth, endure so much bodily, and consequently, mental infirmity." This apostrophe of Mr. Banting's, if somewhat tautologous, is certainly not without reason. What a number of guineas must have been expended under false pretences from his unwilling pockets before he received Mr. Harvey's simple recommendation of a meat diet! Of its ameliorating and rapid results, we have the fullest details. On the 26th of August, 1862, Mr. B. and his Parasite together weighed two hundred and two pounds. On the 7th of September, he had lost two pounds; on the 27th, three more; on the 19th of October, four pounds; on the 9th of November, three more; and so on to the 26th of August in the following year; when he found himself relieved of forty-six pounds of superfluous fat! Listen to his own touching account of this reduction.

"My girth is reduced round the waist, in tailor phraseology, twelve and a quarter inches, which extent was hardly conceivable even by my own friends, or my respected medical adviser, until I put on my former clothing over what I now wear. I am told by all who know me that my personal appearance is greatly improved, and that I seem to wear the stamp of good health. I have lost the feeling of occasional distress, and what I think a remarkable blessing and comfort is, that I have been able safely to leave off knee-bands, which I have worn necessarily for twenty years! Also, 'being now able to stoop with ease and freedom, I have left off using boot-hooks.' The great 'charm' and comfort of the system, he says, that its effects are palpable within a week of trial, which creates a natural stimulus to persevere for a few weeks more, when the fact becomes established beyond question."

The song of gratitude and joy into which Mr. Banting bursts upon going rid of his Parasite, has nothing to match it in literature for enthusiasm combined with matter of fact. The only composition that approaches it is the series of grateful reflections indulged in by Robinson Crusoe upon finding himself safe upon his island. He seems to have been with difficulty persuaded not to express himself in verse.

"I have not felt so well as now for the last twenty years."

"Have suffered no inconvenience whatever in the professional vicinity."

"An reduced many inches in bulk, thirty-five pounds in weight in thirty weeks."

"Come down stairs forward, naturally with perfect ease."

"Go up stairs and take ordinary exercise freely without the slightest inconvenience."

"Can perform every necessary office myself."

"My sight is restored, my hearing improved."

"My other bodily ailments are ameliorated, indeed, almost passed into matter of history."

Surely the above canticle, chanted to music, by a choir of enfranchised fat people—persons who have lost their Parasites—would be exceedingly striking. But Mr. Banting went beyond songs of gratitude. "I have placed a thank-offering of five pounds in the hands of my kind medical adviser, for distribution among his favored hospitals, after gladly paying the usual fee and still remain under overwhelming obligations for his care and attention, which can never hope to repay. Most thankful to Almighty Providence for mercies received, and determined to press the case into public notice as a token of gratitude." Genuine earnestness and piety such as this deserves to be respected. We make no doubt, though we have no personal experience of the fact (for being professionally connected with literature, we are not fat ourselves), that Obesity is something worse than a inconvenience. We are confident that the author is speaking the truth when he says that "no man suffering under this infirmity can be quite insensible to the sneers and marks of the cruel and injudicious assemblies, public vehicles, and the streets—traffic; nor to the annoyance of no adequate space in a public building." We sympathize with him very cordially in his divorce from his Parasite, and detection of its causes in bread, sugar, &c.—those human beams—now stigmatised such condiments.

He does not overrate his former condition, and he is perfectly correct as to the remedy. The remedy may be as old as the hills, he allows, "but its application is of recent date;" the light of the discovery having been so hidden as not to have afforded a glimmer to poor Mr. Banting's twenty years' search for it, and the directions where it might be well applied, to be found. Jockeys, prize-fighters, trippers, have long known something of the advantages of a meat diet for training purposes; but the doctors have never applied it. Since the publication of this pamphlet, hundreds of persons suffering from obesity have been relieved by adopting its recommendations, and many of them have expressed their gratitude to the author of their deliverance. Mr. Banting's is deservedly the most popular writer of the day, with a large name, with the largest sale of the British public. "I deeply regret," he says, perhaps with a secret reference to his fact, "not having secured a photographic portrait of my original figure in its unaltered form." We cordially echo the sentiment. We should like to have seen Mr. William Banting with his Parasite, and without it.

"We thought this was a misprint for 'beasts,' on the first reading, but our editor borrows his image from the dietetics of the horse."

SINGULAR WAR INCIDENT.

Amidst all the horrors of war, many incidents occur, amusing in themselves, and which sometimes, under the most peculiar circumstances, are provocation of merriment, and form subjects for camp stories many years afterwards. I have seen soldiers chase and pick blackberries when a shower of leaden messengers of death was falling round and fast around them, and do many other cool and foolish things. But the following, which actually took place at Mine Run, passes anything I remember to have seen or heard: On one of those blinding mornings, while the armies of Meade and Lee were staring at each other across the little rivulet known as Mine Run, when the elements appeared to be hours and hours ago so near at hand seemed the deadly strife, a solitary sheep leisurely walked along the run on the rebel side. A rebel vidette advanced to remove the prize. In the instant he was covered by a gun in the hands of a Union vidette, who said, "Drop it, or you are a dead Johnny." The proposition was assented to, and there, between the two skirmish lines, Mr. Meade's skinned the sheep, took one half and sent back with it to his post when his challenge, in turn, dropping his gun, crossed the run and got the other half of the sheep and resumed the duties of his post amidst the cheers of his comrades who expected to help him out of it. Of the hundreds of incidents arrayed against each other on the bank of that run, not one violated the sanctity of the agreement by these two armies.

"What is asked? No matter. What is the matter? Never mind. What is the result? It is immaterial.—Punch."

